

THE CHARIOT RACE

By . . .
Roe L.
Hendrick.

She was called "Lorence, the Equestrian Queen," on the showbills; and her photographs, which were sold for twenty-five cents apiece after her act in the ring, were signed "Lorence De La Vielle" in an angular, school girlish hand; but her real name was Louise Bolton.

She joined Maddox & Lane's circus a year after I did, and remained with it eight months, but she attained fame in that brief time. Although fortune did not come to her from the circus, it did come as a direct result of her skill in riding.

I have said in a previous article that Hezekiah Potter's exploit with the lions seemed to me at the moment the bravest deed I had ever seen. But his courage was based on ignorance. On the other hand, Lorence's feat was performed with full knowledge of the peril involved. It was as unselfish as it was daring, and the hundreds who saw and applauded the act fully appreciated it.

We were in Kentucky, the State most noted for its horses and horsemanship, when Louise joined us. She was not Lorence then; that was the invention of Collins, the ringmaster, and very proud he was of it.

Her family had been small farmers for many generations—with a special love for horses. But reverses had come; her father died after a long illness, and with an invalid mother she had been forced to seek a home in the family of a close-figured uncle. The girl, who was in her nineteenth year and exceptionally bright, although not exactly pretty, was bidden to seek domestic service in the neighboring city of Maysville.

Louise walked to Maysville and our circus arrived there that same morning. An inspiration came to her when she saw the white tents. She sought the proprietors, resolved upon securing an engagement as a bareback rider if modest boldness and determination could bring it about.

"My dear young lady," said Mr. Lane, politely but rather patronizingly, "this is a circus, not a riding school. Our performers have to spend months and even years in learning difficult feats before we engage them. There would be no time to teach you on the road."

"Sir," Louise replied firmly, "I, too, have been trained, though not in a riding school. When I was only so high"—indicating the stature appropriate to a babe in arms—"I could ride, and I have ridden ever since—that is"—and her lip quivered—"up to last spring, when papa died and we were sold out. Just give me a trial; I will show you what I can do."

"I have no doubt that you are an accomplished horsewoman—most Kentucky ladies are—but we require much more than that. You see—"

But Louise cut him short. "I am much more than that," she said. "Why, I broke Black Prince, that even papa was afraid to ride! Please let me show you! I'm sure I have all the essentials, the mere tricks I can learn."

"You haven't got to learn self-confidence, anyway," said Mr. Maddox, smiling.

"There are reasons, sir, why I must have self-confidence," she answered, soberly. "I will convince you that it isn't mere conceit. Everybody knows something, I suppose—has some specialty, I mean. Well, riding is mine."

A quiet old ring-horse was brought around. It was late in the forenoon, just after the street parade, and the big tent contained only a handful of circus people.

"I like your grit," Collins, the ringmaster, whispered, as he tightened the girths of the riding-pad. "This horse is safe; do your best!"

She wore an ordinary walking dress of light woolen goods, and did not even stop to remove her sailor hat. I doubt if she had ever seen a performing pad before, and all the conditions were new to her. To make a good showing in such circumstances seemed impossible; but only her heightened color showed that she was embarrassed or ill at ease.

She waved me aside when I stepped forward and offered to take her foot and assist her to mount. With a spring she alighted on her knees on the pad, and there she clung somehow, as Turks sit, while the old horse started round the ring in the familiar swinging lope.

Then followed an exhibition of riding that, in its way, was unequalled. Urging the old white horse to a faster pace, she rose to her feet and danced about his back, maintaining her bal-

ance as easily as if she had been upon a floor.

Suddenly she sprang lightly to the ground. The trained animal slackened his pace, prepared to stop, but she chirruped to him. As he broke into a rocking gallop, with three quick steps she ran lightly to his side and vaulted upon his back, only to spring down and the other side and repeat the performance. This she did three times in one circuit of the ring.

The strength, skill and endurance involved in doing this make it impossible of accomplishment for four trained riders out of every five; and a round of hearty applause rewarded her.

The hand-clapping seemed to give her renewed courage. Blushing, she stopped before the little group of spectators and said: "There were one or two little things that I used to do at Deep Rock in my riding skirt. I have the skirt here in my bundle. Wait a moment, please."

She disappeared into the properties booth beside the performers' entrance, and in a moment emerged, wearing the riding skirt.

"Will some one please scatter a few small coins about the ring?" she asked. This was done, and meanwhile, with her own hands, she quickly removed pad and bridle, leaving the horse without a strap upon him.

Then, urging him ahead, she sprang upon his shoulders, and in some mysterious manner clung there like a Sioux warrior, with her body hanging far to one side; only in her case the feat was rendered far more difficult by having nothing to cling to.

With the horse running as fast as he could be made to go, she bent down and picked up the coins, not only once but many times, for she tossed them ahead as fast as she secured them. This act won for her even louder applause than the other. It was so plain that she was a born rider, and could learn any feat with ease, that she was engaged at a good salary on the spot.

Of course she had to encounter more or less jealousy on the part of some of the other riders, but no one could hold out long against her simple directness. And for the same reason her progress in learning the new points of her troublesome profession were both rapid and complete.

It was about this time that chariot races came into vogue, and every circus manager felt compelled to introduce one into his program.

In St. Louis we were fitted out with four gorgeous chariots, guaranteed to represent the true Roman model, and the proprietors also secured three-horse matched teams to draw them. Thereafter the ring was enlarged and made elliptical, to afford greater scope for the race.

The swiftest team was assigned to "Mademoiselle Lorence," who by prearrangement, was to be the winner in every contest. She drove with as great spirit and delight as if the struggle had been real.

Her team consisted of three blacks, loosely harnessed to the swaying chariot by means of broad breast collars and traces of silver plated steel. They made a brave show, but only the outside horse on the left was really trained, the others having recently been bought because they matched the other horse.

It was at Hot Springs, Arkansas, that the girl's opportunity to be a heroine came to her. We played there early in December, as we were swinging to the South after a summer spent in the Northern Central States of the Union.

I think the race had been run in public perhaps twenty times, and horses as well as drivers were becoming accustomed to it. Of the latter two were men and two women, but all were attired very much alike, in armor-like costumes, glittering with spangles. They drove at a mad run, and the race was very realistic.

The chariots, although not so heavy as they seemed, were lumbering, two-wheeled, springless vehicles, and, lacking thills or a tongue, they slued alarmingly in turning a corner.

In each race the chariots made six circuits, the last the swiftest of all. Before this round now one and now another would forge ahead, but on the final turn Lorence would force her three steeds to the front, take the outside of the course and win by a length, amid great excitement and applause.

That evening the tent was thronged, and under the canopy, which presumably was an exact copy of that covering a proconsul's throne, was a party of well known people. The family of State Senator M., a silver mining mil-

lionaire from Colorado, were three tiers above the ring level. No one was in front of them. Their only son and child, a strong, active boy of about five years of age, sat between his parents, so engrossed in what he saw that he forgot all else.

The chariots were swinging about from the back stretch on the sixth and final round, the drivers calling to the plunging horses and urging them on. The audience was in an uproar and the boy leaned far forward in his eagerness.

Suddenly he lost his balance and fell forward. His father clutched at his little blouse, but the motion-only thrust him farther forward. Over and over he pitched down the steps, and then rolled six or eight feet into the ring, where he lay half-stunned.

The father sprang frantically down the seats, and was at the edge of the course when he was seized and held back. If he had entered the ring he could only have been knocked down and trampled to death. Besides, there was a chance—just one in a hundred, as it seemed—that another and more skilled rescuer might save the boy.

Lorence had just spurred ahead and taken the outside course when she saw the accident. To pull up was impossible; those behind who had seen nothing would run her down before they had realized what had happened.

The little fellow sat up, still half-dazed, and faced her with frightened, wide-open eyes, while the Senator still struggled with his restraining friends. Whatever was done must be accomplished within a few seconds.

Dropping the reins, the girl poised herself on the dashboard of the chariot, and then sprang forward upon the centre horse. The untrained creature cringed and leaped, but with another spring, even more daring than the first, she alighted on the shoulders of the horse on the left. This one she had ridden before, and unexpected as was her coming, he swerved scarcely an inch.

Not even the smallest fraction of a second could safely be lost. Catching the toes of her right foot beneath the shoulder strap that upheld the breast-collar on the horse, she swung her body downward and to the left, as in her act of picking up coins from the ground.

A horse, unless gone mad from fright, will not trample upon a person. In this case the chief danger to the child was from the heavy chariot wheels behind.

As she threw herself forward the intelligent animal crowded his team mates away so that his hoofs barely cleared the boy. Lorence swept her left arm around the child's waist and drew him to her breast. Shifting the weight upward as high as possible, she made a mighty effort to regain the horse's back, but in vain.

Thus outstretched and hanging by one foot the young woman and the child were carried half-way round the ring again. But the other drivers had seen what she had done, and as they checked their speed, the blacks also slowed down, and on the back stretch Mr. Collins ran out and caught them by the heads.

Then we helped the fainting girl to the ground, and, amid almost frantic demonstrations on the part of the audience, carried her into the dressing room. She could not stand, and the physician and surgeon of the troupe was summoned in all haste. But before he reached her side the boy's mother, kneeling on the ground, was holding Lorence's head in her lap and sobbing over her, while she expressed her gratitude in disconnected words and phrases.

The surgeon shook his head. "She will not ride again in months," he said, "if she ever does. Her spine is wrenched, almost dislocated."

"My poor mother!" the girl kept saying. "What will become of her?"

When the cause of her anxiety was explained to the boy's mother, she bent over Lorence again and whispered something in her ear that seemed to reassure her greatly. Despite her pain, she smiled bravely and bade us all farewell when a barouche drove to the side entrance, and she was carried away to the Senator's home.

I never saw Lorence again or heard from her directly, but through Mr. Lane I learned that the Senator and his wife formally adopted her, and also took her mother to their home. After a trip to Europe the health of both was fully restored.

Lorence now is married, and is living happily with her husband in one of the vigorous young cities of the busy Northwest. I do not doubt that horseback riding is still her chief recreation; nor do I believe that she has grown ashamed of her brief experience as a professional equestrienne. — Youth's Companion.

The Guiana Diamond Fields.

Though difficult of access, up a stream full of rapids and cataracts, the recently discovered diamond fields of British Guiana are attracting a good deal of attention. The United States Consul at Demerara reports that stones amounting to a large sum have already been exported through the Custom House. The fields are situated on the Essequibo River, the point of rendezvous being Bartica.

SOUTHERN FARM NOTES.

Topics of Interest to the Planter, Stockman and Truck Grower.

Silos and Silage in the South.

The following question by a Mississippian, answered by Mr. Andrew M. Soule, of the Tennessee Experiment Station, may be of interest to readers: "I am contemplating building a silo. Will it prove a paying investment in the South, where we can graze cattle in the winter except when too wet, and where large crops of turnips and rutabagas can be grown? I want to feed silage to young mules, colts, cows, calves and work stock when not in use. Daring about one-third of the winter the ground is too wet to graze. I am raising beef cattle, but do not fatten them for market."

It will certainly pay to have a silo in the South, as it cannot only be used to advantage in the winter when the ground is too wet to permit pasturing, but it can also be used to advantage in the summer when drouth prevails and when it would otherwise be necessary to use soiling crops, which are expensive unless they can be utilized in the form of pasture. Silage has been fed at the Tennessee Experiment Station throughout the entire summer, and when fed in comparison with such soiling crops as cow peas, corn and sorghum, has given better results with cows than the freshly cut soiling crops. By means of the silo your correspondent can preserve a large quantity of food in the most palatable form with less labor than after any other fashion.

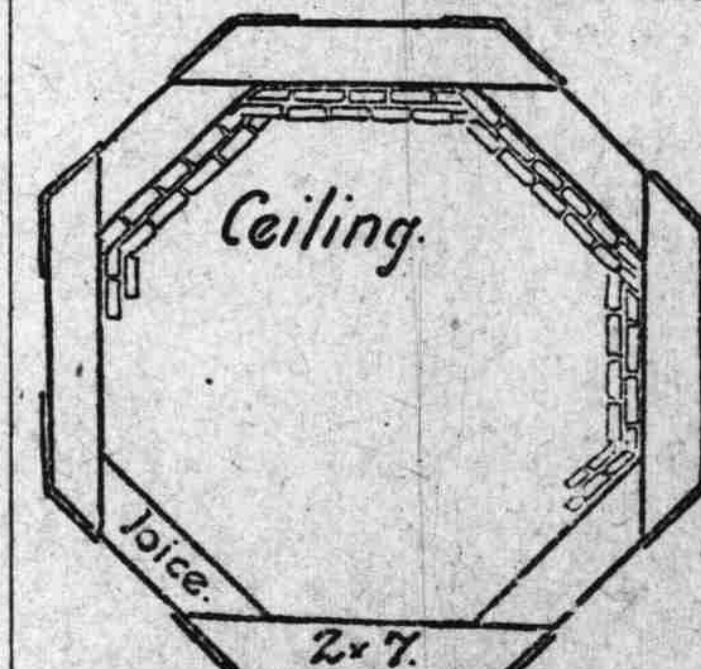
It costs to make a ton of hay from peas and corn fodder from \$3 to \$5, depending on the crop yield. According to the yields obtained at this station, with those crops varying from three to five tons of cured hay, the first cost of making the hay is greater than putting an acre of the same crop in the silo. While the hay will lose about one-quarter of its food value the same crop if properly preserved in the silo will not lose more than five to ten per cent. of its food value. When the crop is put in the silo everything connected with it is done, whereas the hay will need to be handled over again and frequently cut in order to get the cattle to consume it to the best advantage, all of which entails a good deal of extra labor and expense.

For feeding beef cattle your correspondent will find sorghum silage particularly valuable, and with certain varieties, as the Red Head, he can obtain a yield of from fifteen to twenty tons. According to some experiments made the green weight of corn fodder, peas and turnips was respectively 39,645 pounds, 17,645 pounds and 28,500 pounds; the dry matter furnished by these crops was 5580 pounds, 2590 pounds and 2559 pounds respectively. At the Pennsylvania Station the cost of placing an acre of sugar beets in the pit was \$56.07, and an acre of corn in the silo, \$21.12. At the Tennessee Station in 1901 one acre of corn in the silo cost \$15.30, and one acre of cow peas and sorghum in the silo cost \$10.40.

Your correspondent will make no mistake in building a silo for use in the South. These figures make it evident that the silo will prove an invaluable aid to the Southern farmer, whether he contemplates feeding beef or dairy cattle or other farm stock. One can feed silage with advantage to horses and mules. Of course it must be fed judiciously, and animals cannot be expected to do as hard and continuous labor as where they are receiving a high grain ration and plenty of hay, but for a maintenance ration and for light work during the winter months it will prove excellent for horses and mules and other farm stock.

A Cheap Homemade Silo.

A perfect silo can be built for one half to one-third the expense they cost many who build or buy them. By building it octagon, or eight-sided in shape and ceiling perpendicular with two thicknesses of inch hemlock boards with felt paper between a perfect silo may be made at small cost. I built one in August, '99, and have filled



FRAMEWORK PLAN OF OCTAGON SILO.

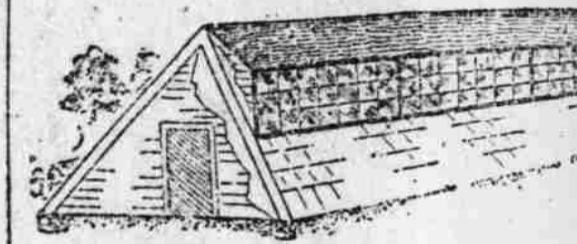
it twice. It gave perfect satisfaction last winter. Every silo that has been built in this vicinity since, and I know of twelve, have been built after the same plan, and others will be built the coming year. They can be built any size wanted. With 2500 feet of good hemlock boards, 900 2x7's, three feet long and \$6 worth of felt and nails,

three men can build a silo in ten days. The expense for roof and labor would be the same as for any other shape or style.

I got out the lumber for mule and paying the saw mill, cement, paper, mason work and all complete cost me \$29.70. The size is twelve feet inside and twenty-four feet high. It will hold silage enough to feed two head of cattle twice a day for six months. When the foundation is completed place the sills on and nail the corners together. Then set the braces up at the corners and plumb the with a level or plumb staff, let the man hold the joist on the outside where they belong, place two feet apart and nail them from the inside. Spike the joist at the corners as you go for the first twelve feet, then put the section up the same way. The silo may be sawed the same length with a crosscut saw by bunching them together. By the ground plan it will be seen that the joist and boards at the corners all have to be the same size which is a square miter or an angle of forty-five degrees.

Easily Made Poultry House.

The little poultry house shown in the accompanying illustration can be had for about \$1 per running foot. It is fourteen feet wide at bottom and length is determined by the number of hens one may wish to house. If



POULTRY HOUSE FOR EVERYBODY.

timber is used, take one piece six inches thick by six inches wide and fourteen feet long with another of the size, but only twelve feet long. Place them together at the top and fourteen feet apart at the bottom on a foundation of coarse gravel or cobble stones with a flat one for the end of the timber to rest upon. Have a set of the rafters every six feet. On the outside build out the windows by nailing on two by four strips perpendicular to the surface of the ground. Hang the windows on hinges at the bottom, open toward the inside and let them rest on the main timbers while open. Cover with boards, paper and shingles.

The Cotton Crop.

Fortunately for the South cotton is the least exhausting to the soil of any of our staple crops. The lint of the cotton and the oil of the seed contain but an insignificant amount of fertilizing elements. Therefore, if the roots and leaves and stalks are turned under and the hulls and meal of the seeds applied to the soil or are fed to cattle and the resulting manure used the loss of fertility from growing a crop of cotton is very small. But many farmers on rich alluvial soils knock down, pile and burn the cotton stalks because they are in the way of the plow, and farmers on upland, seeing their more prosperous bottom land neighbors burning cotton stalks, go home and do the same. This is highly injudicious and on thin lands is sure to result in a deserted farm or a stunted living.

The fertilizing of cotton is as yet an unsolved problem, for the same process that gives good results in Mississippi fails in Arkansas, and fertilizers used profitably in Georgia do not benefit the crop in Texas. Especially is the Texas black land a puzzle to the farmer who would largely increase his yield by fertilizing his fields. Experiments so far indicate that the land is better off in the matter of yield of cotton without than with any fertilizer that has yet been systematically applied. The writer had a field part of which was sandy post oak and part black and sticky. Sheep were penned on two acres of the sandy land, and this land planted to cotton for six alternate years averaged 515 pounds of lint.

The same pen, inclosed by the same fence, was removed to the black land and used as a sheep pen for two years, and the average crop of cotton for three alternate years was 268 pounds of lint. The average of previous crops on this black land was not accurately known, but was believed to have been not less than 275 pounds. Thus it would seem that the very fertilizer that more than doubled the yield of the sandy soil was slightly detrimental to the black soil. This is a subject that needs exhaustive systematic experimentation, and this should be supplied by the State.—Farm and Ranch.

Wheat as a Forage Crop.

Many farmers in the Piedmont talk about substituting wheat as a forage crop instead of oats. The latter are liable to be killed three winters in four. (Wheat if sown in September will be in the dough state the last week in May when it should be cut. Horses and mules will fatten on the feed without any corn.—The Cotton Plant.